

To the Members of the California Assembly:

I am returning AB 2545 without my signature.

Strong workplace safety laws are a necessary and vital component of a positive business environment in California. More importantly, workplace safety laws must be adequately enforced. That is why the budget I signed in July made no cuts to labor and workplace safety law enforcement. Workers must feel confident that their places of work are safe.

California law already provides for the assessment of large penalties against employers who willfully violate workplace safety laws. In fact, criminal penalties for willful violations of such laws were significantly raised in 2000. These penalties, buttressed by a commitment to the enforcement of workplace safety laws, help ensure a safe working environment for working Californians without creating a business environment that drives businesses from our state.

Given the recent criminal penalty increases, as well as the commitment of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency to enforce California labor law, I see no reason to support additional civil penalty increases for one particular workplace safety violation.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger